FBIS
DAILY REPORT

MIDDLE EAST AND SOUTH ASIA REVIEW

23 DECEMBER 1980

American Hostages

Majlis Speaker Hashemi Rafsanjani told a press conference in Tehran that if the United States does not respond positively to Iran's conditions for the release of the hostages, Iran will put the hostages on trial. According to PARS, Rafsanjani said that "we will try the hostages as our last resort." Tehran radio's Arabic service quoted him as saying "the matter will end" in their trial "should the United States refuse to respond." The speaker said that the Iranian Government has made no changes in the Majlis conditions; it has only "elaborated" on how to return the late shah's wealth to Iran. Calling the United States its main enemy, Rafsanjani declared that Iran's "defeat" of the Iraqi invasion "has dashed the hopes of Carter, Reagan and their allies" to overthrow the Islamic revolution.

Iran Domestic Affairs

In an interview with a Tehran radio correspondent, Majlis Speaker Rafsanjani revealed that "in recent weeks an extensive plot was hatched against the policy of the imam." The conspiracy was foiled, the Majlis speaker added, through the efforts of the Iranian people. Part of the conspiracy, Rafsanjani said, was the publication of documents purporting to show misuse of government funds by Ayatollah Hoseyn 'Ali Montazeri and himself. He stated that the judicial authorities have been asked to investigate these matters, and he warned that the "enemies of Islam" are continuing their efforts to discredit Iranian officials and "create suspicion among the people."

Iran-Iraq Conflict

Tariq 'Aziz Comment--Iraqi Deputy Prime Minister Tariq 'Aziz told a Paris press conference that Iraq's forces "have met their objectives as designed by the political leadership" in the war with Iran and that it is Iran that is exhausted by the fighting, according to INA. The deputy prime minsiter said Iraq's call for negotiations is not a sign of weakness but a genuine desire for a peaceful settlement that recognizes Iraq's legitimate rights and those of the Arab nation in the region. According to AFP, 'Aziz specified those rights as Iran's recognition of Iraqi sovereignty in the Shatt al-'Arab waterway, an Iranian promise not to interfere in Iraq's domestic affairs and Iran's restoration of the three disputed islands in the Gulf to the UAE. The AFP also said that the Iraqi minister confirmed that France intends to deliver the Mirage fighters Iraq ordered and that the flow of oil through Syria has been halted because of "a technical breakdown," not by the war or any Syrian political decision. Earlier reports speculated that the pipeline had been damaged by Iranian air strikes or guerrilla attacks.

Military Situation--An Iraqi General Command communique, reported by Baghdad radio's Voice of the Masses, noted heavy fighting around Sar-e Pol Zahab, Susangerd and across the Karkheh River near Dezful and claimed 297 Iranians killed. For its part, Tehran radio reported Iraqi shelling of Ahvaz, Susangerd and Abadan with minor clashes at Dub-e-Herdan, Amirabad, Shur-e Shirin and on the Allaho Akhbar heights.

Kurdish Situation

Insurgency in Iran--Tehran radio reported recent operations by "counterrevolutionaries" in Saqqez, Sar Dasht and Parveh and claimed that in Marivan a number of Kurdish Democratic Party (KDP) officials, including political officer Mohammad Sa'd Kalkal, have been captured and sentenced to death. Commenting on this claim, the clandestine Voice of Iranian Kordestan radio said that if the death sentences on KDP officials are carried out, the KDP will execute captured revolution guards whom it has condemned to death. The radio earlier reported clashes between government forces and Peshmergas near Mahabad on 17 December during which, it claimed, the Peshmergas killed 118 Iranian soldiers and revolution guards. The radio also reported fighting in Shahin Dezh and said Iranian aircraft attacked Kurdish areas.

Israel

Golan Heights--Jerusalem radio reported that the Israeli Cabinet decided to recommend that the Knesset remove MK Ge'ula Kohen's private bill on annexing the Golan Heights from its agenda. Stating that the annexation proposal cannot improve Israel's security and has not come at a suitable time, the Cabinet secretary nevertheless emphasized that the Golan should remain in Israel's hands but said the issue will be decided in negotiations with Syria.

Eytan Comments--Chief of Staff Lt Gen Refa'el Eytan, in statements reported by ITIM, emphasized Israel's desire to pursue an offensive war against "terrorists" in southern Lebanon but maintained that the IDF is deployed on a purely defensive basis on all other fronts. Eytan added that Israel has increased its support for Maj Sa'd Haddad's forces in Lebanon since it has a clear interest in maintaining this Christian strip along the border to prevent Palestinian forces approaching the fence.

Lebanon

Beirut radio reported that calm has finally returned to the strife-torn city of Zahlah following a 21 December cease-fire agreement. The Voice of Lebanon radio earlier reported intensive Syrian shelling of the city and said it was besieged by an estimated 8,000 Syrian, Palestinian and leftist forces. The Voice of Palestinian radio said Syrian Arab Deterrent Forces took action against rightist militias after they amassed their forces on the streets and shelled a vehicle of the deterrent forces, killing several Syrians.

Arab Foreign Ministers Conference

According to KUNA, the Kuwaiti newspaper AL-QABAS, citing "diplomatic sources," revealed that contacts made by Algerian Foreign Minister Mohamed Seddik Ben Yahia during his recent tour of Gulf states led to a preliminary agreement to restore Arab unity. AL-QABAS said an agreement was reached on holding an Arab foreign ministers conference for all Arab countries except Egypt during the Islamic Conference foreign ministers meeting scheduled in Saudi Arabia on 17 January.

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KARMAL ADDRESSES REPRESENTATIVES OF BAMIAN PROVINCE

LD202210 Kabul Domestic Service in Pashto 1530 GMT 20 Dec 80

[Excerpts] Babrak Karmal, the general secretary of the PDPA Central Committee, head of the Revolution Council and prime minister, received at 1400 today a number of representatives of the noble and toiling people of Bamian Province at Delkhsha Palace at the Revolution Council headquarters. He spoke to them in an atmosphere of freedom and democracy.

After greeting the noble representatives of the people of Bamyan, Babrak Karmal, on behalf of the PDPA Central Committee, the government and the Revolution Council, conveyed his own heart-felt greetings to the representatives of the noble and toiling people of Bamian and through them to all the people. The head of the Revolution Council and prime minister, during his talk with the representatives, said:

Dear and noble countrymen: The people of Afghanistan are like organs of the same body. The people of (Hazarah), who live in the center of our country, are the sane and toiling members of our society. It was the oppressors and traitors of our people and of our country who always wanted to isolete and keep the noble and toiling people of (Hazarah) apart from their compatriots and brothers. But with the grace of Almighty God, there is no power in the world which can separate the courageous and toiling people of (Hazarah) from other tribes and brothers in Afghaistan.

Babrak Karmal, in mentioning the dark age of Amin and his criminal band and their aggressions, added: An oppressed government can only rule temporarily and will not last. But a just and humble government, a government that serves the people, will always last. The present Government of Afghanistan wants to remain forever, for it understands the truth that the government should be the servant of the people and not their master or lord.

I want you representatives of the noble people to raise your voices so that they can be heard in all parts of (Hazarah) region and in the country. Say that the government will no longer allow anyone to oppress or encroach on others and that it is the servant of the people and will provide for the welfare of its society.

The head of the Revolution Council and prime minister added: At this moment the military regimes of Pakistan, America, China, Egypt and Israel are giving military training to their representatives and servants so that they can enter Afghanistan and kill our noble and toiling people. Imperialism and reaction wanted, through the representatives, the traitor Hafizollah Amin and his executioner band, to incite each Afghan tribe against the other and prepare them for fratricide, thus dividing our beloved Afghanistan which is our pride, and removing it from the map of the world. Fortunately, the change of 27 December 1979 with the cooperation of our friendly and brother country, the USSR, ended this fratricide.

Babrak Karmal added: Today we must draw tight like a fist. We must strengthen peace and security in the country and encourage those people who were deceived by the enemies and who took refuge in the mountains to return to their homes; we must encourage them to cooperate with their government and avoid killing their Muslim brothers.

The servants of imperialism and reaction who have sold themselves for kaldars [Pakistani currency]--and dollars, have sold their honor and grace and are creating confusion by calling themselves Muslims. They are not Muslims but hypocrites whose foul plans should be recognized and they themselves eliminated.

Noble people, many things cause us grief. But we should mention that for the building of a prosperous and peaceful society we should, before anything else, maintain security in the country.

The head of the Revolution Council and prime minister, at the end of his talks, which was accompanied by the applause and attention of the audience, asked the noble representatives of Bamian to convey his greetings to all the toiling people of (Hazarah) region and teach them the line of the Revolution government.

A BAKHTAR correspondent reports that afterwards, from among the noble representatives of the people of Bamian, (Sayyed Jahangirshah), (Haji Sayyed Sultan 'Ali), (Sayyed Mohammad Baqer) and ('Abdol Khalil) made speeches to express their firm determination to assist their revolution government in every way possible. They shall be the friend of the supporters of revolution and the foe of the antirevolution.

Defends Soviet Role

LD212006 Kabul Domestic Service in Dari 1630 GMT 21 Dec 80

[Speech by Babrak Karmal at 20 December meeting in Kabul with representatives of people of Bamian Province; recorded]

[Excerpt] Muslim, toiling brothers, compatriots, esteemed religious leaders: Some words are heard concerning the fact that the Soviets have come here. Well, esteemed brothers, could you believe how many people are being trained at this moment in Pakistan, and are being sent to Pakistan? Who are their teachers? It is the British, Americans, Egyptians, Israelis--that is the Jews--the Chinese and the Pakistanis. They teach them how to enter your country and kill your compatriots.

Nobody can kill the government. You may be sure of that! With the help of God Almighty, there is no power in the world which could eliminate the present Government of Afghanistan. [applause] Of this you can be sure. [applause] Very well! So, they only disrupt the peace of the people.

They send them from Pakistan, and I say that they are sent from Iran too! But from Iran, they are not sent by Imam Khomeyni. The patriotic and true and the noble religious leaders of the (?true) Islam do not send them. So who sends them? The servants of SAVAK. If you have not heard its name, it was an American espionage organization in Iran. It is the remnants of that, SAVAK, it is the remnants of Pahlavi, the tyrannical and despotic shah of Iran; it is the reactionary servants of the U.S. imperialists against which the people's Islamic revolution, under the leadership of Imam Khomeyni, is fighting; it is the enemies of those who train elements and persons in Iran and send them to Afghanistan--not the true Islam of Iran. You must be aware of this.

In Pakistan too, it is not the Muslim people of Pakistan, but a militarist regime who as you know killed Bhutto, who was elected by the people who train our enemies in great numbers; Pakistan, China, United States, Britain, Egypt and Israel are also with them, who on one hand [passage indistinct].

As for the USSR, have a look at the world map; tell your children to bring you the map of the world; have a look at the USSR. If you divide the world into six pieces, one piece of that is the USSR; what necessity, therefore, drives it to Afghanistan from the point of view of health [passage indistinct].

You, who belong to a village, and who have a nice friendly neighbor, do you want this neighbor to be comfortable and live in peace, or not? Now I want to ask another question: You have another strong neighbor who persecutes him and behaves harshly against him; now there is another very strong neighbor who does not want to interfere, but who has sympathy with you. If you ask this neighbor one day to come and help you against the cruel and atrocious neighbors, is this against Islam? Is this against the interests of the homeland? Is it against freedom and independence? Is it against Islam? (?Of course not), esteemed brothers. Afghanistan was about to fall; if the 27 December change did not take place, today Afghanistan would not have existed in the world. I can tell you that half of the population of Afghanistan would have been sacrificed today.

Today a war would have started in the world; God save you from such savagery. Concerning the change of 27 December and the temporary Soviet assistance, as soon as we are capable of maintaining our peace and security, our esteemed Soviet friends will soon thereafter return to their homeland; what do they want, here, the whole day to tolerate troubles, to sustain difficulties for us?

Moreover, you are aware, that the moment I came, when the new government was formed, that I wrote to Imam Khomeyni. Do you remember? Did I not write a long letter? Was it not published in the newspapers and news media? Have we not several times reiterated to Pakistan and Iran that they should come and sit around a table and resolve all those disputed issues like brothers. Do you know or not? So we have opened our hearts, as pure as the pure, noble toiling, progressive and Muslim people. We have extended our hand to everyone to bring about peace and security.

(?Right is with) those who earn it with the sword. Very well, we ourselves ought to bring about peace inside our country.

INCREASED SOVIET ACTIVITY REPORTED IN KABUL

LD191157 London THE DAILY TELEGRAPH in English 19 Dec 80 p 4

[Bruce Loudon dispatch: "Security Drive in Kabul"]

[Text] Islamabad--Gunfights, explosions and large-scale movement of Soviet ground and air forces in Kabul were reported last night, just a week before the anniversary of the Russian invasion of Afghanistan.

Reports reaching Islamabad spoke of a vastly increased Soviet security operation in the capital, apparently in anticipation of trouble to mark the anniversary.

They also indicate that tension is rising following the unexplained deaths of two young girls found in a field near the city's Darulaman Palace.

It is widely rumoured in Kabul that Russian soldiers had "something to do with their deaths", and there has been a popular outcry against the occupation forces.

Several hundred Afghans joined delegations which went to various ministries demanding punishment of the Soviet soldiers for the killings. Precise details of what happened have not emerged.

The reports say that Kabul is being rocked by gunfire and explosions almost every night. Various explanations are offered, and most seem to indicate that anti-communist "mojahedin" insurgents are responsible for at least some of the fighting.

An electric power sub-station is said to have been blown up by the insurgents, while fighting was also reported at Kabul's big Bagrami textile mill.

There is said to have been a significant movement of Soviet armour through the streets of Kabul in the past few days, and this has coincided with stepped up vigilance "against anything that moves," according to one report.

In an unusual development several car loads of Afghan secret policemen (the Khad), as well as groups of Soviet troops, took up position around several foreign embassies and scrutinised all comings and goings. Again there was no explanation of this.

The reports indicate heavy air transport activity, as well as the movement of giant Mi-6 helicopters flying to and from the southwest "through some fairly thick weather" presumably to operational zones.

A new Soviet tactic is referred to in the reports: In the operations in the countryside, especially in areas of high "mojahedin" concentrations, Soviet armour is being airlifted over mountains in order to penetrate into difficult terrain. The armour is then left to police these areas.

In fighting in the countryside, according to the reports, a large "mojahedin" force which had penetrated the Paghman mountains around Kabul is said to have evaded a major Soviet offensive which led to the closure of the road from the capital into the mountains.

SITUATION REPORTED ON ANNIVERSARY OF INVASION

LD221509 London THE DAILY TELEGRAPH in English 22 Dec 80 p 4

[Bruce Loudon dispatch: "Flood of Starving Afghan Refugees a Year After Invasion"]

[Text] Peshawar, Pakistan--A new wave of Afghan refugees, many of them starving and emaciated, is flooding across the snow-capped Hindu Kush into Pakistan.

This indicates that as Afghanistan approaches the first anniversary on Saturday of the Soviet occupation, there is still intense fighting between communist forces and Moslem mojahedin (holy warriors).

Hundreds of refugees are crossing the border each day, and Pakistan officials estimate the number will soon exceed 1,500,000.

Those arriving now are showing signs of greater deprivation than before, and some relief workers believe this may, in part, result from the communists trying to starve people into submission.

Stretcher parties are overworked to carry refugees to first-aid centers set up by the Pakistanis. Some have walked for hundreds of miles through high mountain passes.

All tell similar harrowing tales. Generally they speak of their villages or homes being destroyed in anti-mojahedin raids by Soviet forces, and of having to flee from the occupation forces and live in caves.

They speak, too, of vital food and grain supplies to rural areas having dried up, either by design or default, and of having no alternative but to take to mountain trails and head for Pakistan.

The refugees are being cared for by Pakistani authorities at camps north, south, and east of Peshawar, and they still feel insecure, for like many people in Pakistan they fear that sooner or later the Soviet forces, in their determination to crush the mojahedin will cross the border in force.

What are to the Pakistanis genuine refugee camps are regarded by the Russians as "training bases" for the mojahedin and while they have seldom so far been real targets, there is apprehension that they may be if the Kremlin concludes it cannot defeat the insurgency in any other way.

In October there were three strikes by the communists against Pakistani frontier posts, and the belief is that these could be forerunners. But it must be doubted whether the Red Army generals in Kabul feel any real need to thrust across the border into Pakistan.

The situation, from their point of view, is really not all that bad. A Red Army of more than 100,000 men has not defeated the mojahedin, and for that matter does not control all of Afghanistan, but the fighting appears containable.

The Russians can go anywhere they wish in Afghanistan, and hold any part of the country if they so determine.

The flight of so many new refugees seems to indicate that the Russians are on the offensive in several parts of the country, and this is confirmed by reports of troops movements in Kabul.

Latest accounts arriving in Peshawar speaks of heavey nightly gunfire and explosions in Kabul and other towns, but this, over the months, has become the norm.

The Russians have lost, by most accounts, perhaps 12,000 men since they went into Afghanistan. But, without freedom of expression at home, this does not seem to be too troublesome for them.

Moreover, the mojahedin remain a disparate force. Unity has totally eluded them and despite international uproar they remain largely neglected by the free world.

President as-Sadat of Egypt has alone backed his words with action, and around Peshawar it is now possible to see Kalashinikov combat rigles and rocket-propelled grenades with Arabic markings.

The mojahedin are desperately short of effective weapons, and the Soviet Union has total unchallenged air superiority in which to deploy helicopter gunships.

The mojahedin desperately need an anti-aircraft weapon like the Russian SAM-7. The American "Redeye" would be an answer, but its supply to the mojahedin would require a major policy decision by the new Reagan administration.

Politically Moscow has done less well. In Kabul the Russians and Babrak Karmal, whom they installed as the head of a government, are clearly despised.

Meanwhile strife within the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan, which ostensibly united Karmal's "Parcham" faction and the faction that was loyal to the executed President Hafizullah Amin, known as "Khalq," is as deep as ever, and this may explain much of the gunfire heard in Kabul.

The most that can be realistically be hoped for is that the Russians will seek eventually to establish a regime more acceptable to the mojahedin. But many more people are likely to lose their lives first.

GANDHI WARNS OF 'DANGER', ' DIFFICULT' SITUATION

BK200928 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0830 GMT 20 Dec 80

[Text] Prime Minister Mrs Indira Gandhi has warned that the country is surrounded by danger and said the present economic situation is more difficult than ever before since independence. She was addressing Congress-I Party workers in the Kolar gold fields. Mrs Gandhi decried the agitations being staged in various counts in the country and urged the people not to fritter away their energy on them since they harm the unity of the country and weaken its integrity. She said agitations weaken the people's will and divert their attention from the high and far-sighted goals set by the country's great leaders. The road to progress is bound to be difficult. Nothing worthwhile could be achieved easily without sacrifice, she added.

DEMONSTRATIONS, VIOLENCE CONTINUE IN ASSAM

Daytime Strike Observed

BK200926 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0830 GMT 20 Dec 80

[Text] A dawn to dusk strike is being observed in Gauhati today in response to the call given by the Alla Assam Students Union and the All Assam Gana Sangram Parishad [People's Action Council]. Shops and markets in Gauhati are closed, and most of the vehicular traffic is off the road. However, the state transport corporation is maintaining a skeleton bus service in the town. The services of the Indian Airlines Corporation to Gauhati are not affected. The central services continue to function as usual. In the Secretariat at Dispur 551 employees, included 416 non-gazetted, attended office today.

Army Called In

BK200957 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0240 GMT 20 Dec 80

[Text] News agency reports from Gauhati say troops were called out yesterday in Tamulpur, about 80 km from the state capital, to assist civil authorities in maintaining law and order. This followed violence in the area. The army staged a flag march in the town and assisted the civil administration in enforcing curfew regulations. The police had to burst teargas shells and make a baton charge in the town to disperse violent agitators in front of the sub-deputy collector's office.

Agency reports, quoting official sources, also say that the army was asked to stand by in other tension-ridden areas in the state. Paramilitary forces continued round the clock patrolling and armed police pickets were posted in strategic areas as a precautionary measure. Barpeta and (Rangia) towns are also under curfew since Thursday afternoon. State Chief Minister Ramesh Chandra told newsmen in Disput yesterday that police resorted to baton charge and burst teargas shells to disperse agitators violating prohibitory orders at Jorhat, Sibsagar and Lahul. In Gauhati, police chased away groups of agitators in different parts of the city. He said the situation in Barpeta and (Rangia) towns remained quiet but tense throughout the day yesterday.

RAFSANJANI SPEAKS ON HOSTAGES AT PRESS CONFERENCE

LD222022 Tehran in English to Europe 1930 GMT 22 Dec 80

[Text] Hojjat ol-Eslam Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani, the speaker of the Islamic assembly of Iran, today attended a press conference and answered the questions put to him by local and foreign reporters. Regarding the issue of the hostages, Rafsanjani said: the answer which the Islamic Republic of Iran gave to the United States was based on the decision taken by the Islamic assembly. He added that no changes have been made in that decision but, in his words: The Government of Iran has elaborated in it how to return the assets of the deceased shah to Iran. He added: If the U.S. Government does not give Iran its legitimate right then Iran will put the American hostages on court trial. The speaker of the Islamic assembly, in response to a question, said: Iran regards the U.S. Government as its main and number one enemy and this government has taken all measures possible to bring Iran to its knees. But in his words: The defeat of the invading regime of Iraq into Iran with 12 divisions has dashed the hopes of Carter, Reagan and their allies.

PARS Report

LD230908 Tehran PARS in English 0815 GMT 23 Dec 80

[Text] Tehran, 23 Dec (PARS) Majlis Speaker Hojjat ol-Eslam Rafsanjani said that if the United States should refuse to pay us that which it owes us, we will try the hostages as our last resort. "Since we thought that the United States had plans to exploit the issue of the stages [as received] for further conspiracy and aggression against the Islamic revolution of Iran," said he, "we chose to present fair conditions in order to disarm the United States. The Islamic Consultative Assembly of Iran has already declared its ruling on the issue and the Iranian Government is obliged to comply with the Majlis ruling whether or not the United States should accept it."

The head of the Iranian parliament, who was speaking at a press conference in Tehran yesterday, said that the Iranians already knew too well that the United States is furious and that it will continue to do anything it can against the Islamic Republic of Iran.

Asked whether or not he thought that Iran faced an impending military aggression by the United States during the remaining period of the Carter administration, he said the military defeat of the Iraqi Government in its aggression against Iran had already disappointed Carter, Reagan and any other person from seeking any military aggression against Iran. Asked for his views on the rumours of an impending coup d'etat by the former generals of the former regime now in foreign countries, he said that the government had prepared itself to cope with any conspiracy designed and engineered by the 'Americans' and their agents in the region and that it was capable of foiling any such threat.

Tehran Arabic Report

JN230847 Tehran International Service in Arabic 0400 GMT 23 Dec 80

[Text] At a press conference attended by local and foreign correspondents, Hojjat ol-Eslam val Moslemin Hashemi Rafsanjani, speaker of the Majlis, said within the context of his reply to a question of the U.S. hostages that the Iranian government's reply to the United States is based on the conditions approved by the Majlis and on implementation of these conditions in letter and spirit.

There have been no changes in these conditions; nay, they have become clearer, and the question of how to restore Iran's funds has been defined. We thought that the Americans wanted to use the hostages as a pretext to carry out further aggression and plots against the Islamic revolution in Iran. We deprived the United States of its ability to use this weapon in the world after we had announced our conditions. If the United States refuses to respond to them, the matter will end by having the hostages brought to trial.

The speaker of the Majlis added that the Majlis has given its opinion on this subject and that the government's mission is clear whether the United States refuses or responds to these conditions. Should the United States refuse to respond, the U.S. hostages will be brought to trial.

Asked his opinion whether Iran might be exposed to military aggression during Reagan's administration if the issue of the hostages is not solved during Carter's era, he said: From the beginning, we considered and still consider the United States our No 1 enemy. Its move is one of an enemy [words indistinct]. The United States plotted against the Islamic Republic [word indistinct] and will continue to plot. However, the experience of the military defeat [words indistinct] has instilled despair in Carter's spirit and [words indistinct] to attack Iran militarily. [words indistinct] they will not cease their plots and we are fully prepared to defend our rights against any aggression.

Asked whether Iran's stand has changed [word indistinct] the Soviet Union of Afghanistan in light of Iran's unity with the states of the Arab Steadfastness and Confrontation Front and its stand on the Afghan issue, he said: Our unity with the states of the Steadfastness and Confrontation Front has not been proposed, but from the political point of view, we feel that we are to a certain extent close to (?them). Our stands have become closer recently, and we will continue to cooperate with them. I hope that this will develop in the future. As for Afghanistan, our stand has not changed and we believe that the occupation of Afghanistan is an unjust occupation and that right is on the side of the struggle of the Muslim Afghan people. I believe that the states of the Steadfastness and Confrontation Front support this policy in the future as well as our policy toward the liberation movements and every genuine independent movement.

RAFSANJANI INTERVIEWED ON HOSTAGES ISSUE, PLOTS

LD221958 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1706 GMT 22 Dec 80

[Interview with Hojjat ol-Eslam val Moslemin Hashemi Rafsanjani, speaker of the Majlis, on 22 December conducted by unidentified Tehran radio and television correspondent--location not given, recorded]

[Excerpts] [Question] Concerning the answer given by the Iranian Government the American Government in connection with the issue of the hostages, I wish to ask to what extent have the views of the people been implemented in this answer and are they in accordance with the demands of the people or not?

[Answer] In the name of God, the compassionate, the merciful.

I have had no opportunity to carefully compare the text of the Majlis' approval with this letter, but, according to my first reading of it, it seems to me that it accords. [Passage omitted on the issue of housing and land ownership and the settlement of war victims]

[Question] In your previous speeches you referred to some conspiracies against the clergy or, generally, against the Islamic Republic of Iran. If possible, please explain this matter further.

[Answer] Yes. I believe that in recent weeks an extensive plot was hatched against the policy of the imam. People saw some parts of it. Some of it has not been discovered or has been discovered but has not been announced that the people do not know. [sentence as heard] However, on the whole, the conspiracy was defeated due to the widespread participation of the people and the feelings which they demonstrated. The full dimensions of this conspiracy are becoming clear in bits and pieces.

One of the aspects of the conspiracy was what they published recently in connection with the money which, with the assistance of the imam, had been given by Ayatollah Montazeri to the Sunni clergy from the donations made to the imam and from charitable funds, and which are still being given so that they may also have a fund like the Shi'ite clergy. Of course, due to the principles of the Shi'ite sect, the Shi'ite clergy have no need of the government funds. The seminarists are paid without the assistance of government funds. But as they do not have these popular facilities, the imam and the government decided to assist them and this was done. This was made into a program.

They published a document, thinking that it was [word indistinct].

There was another issue--involving myself. Precisely on the days when the conspiracy started, they had prepared something involving the Central Bank. There was some truth to it, because on the first days and first weeks of the war the guards corps did not possess fighting equipment. Although allocations had been made, they did not pay any money to the corps to buy weapons. They complained to the imam. The imam ordered the Central Bank to put funds at the disposal of the corps so that they could purchase war material from abroad.

Later, the Central Bank said that the imam should appoint a representative. The imam appointed Mr Khameni'i, the Friday imam of Tehran, as his representative. But as he was in Khuzestan and could not be here the imam ordered that I should be his representative.

The Central Bank told me to write to them. I wrote to the Central Bank saying that according to the orders of the Imam the sum of 2 billion rials in foreign exchange from the corps allocations should be put at the disposal of the corps for purchasing war material.

Then, we learned that they had changed that letter into a banker's draft. The person who had prepared the draft had deliberately written: payee: so and so Hashemi Rafsanjani, and received by: the official in charge of the equipment of the corps, Mr Mohsen Rafiqdust. Then they gave this draft to the counterrevolutionaries so that they could publish it at the necessary time, saying that we had had taken foreign exchange out of the country.

Well, everyone should ask this question: So much money is sent abroad for purchases, all the ministries and organizations have such things and make purchases, but drafts are never issued in the names of individuals but in the name of the organization, the department or the ministry. So why did they issue this draft in the name of a person?

Also, why has this draft been leaked? Who has leaked it, which official person has leaked it and where did it go to in order to be made public in such a way?

I have asked the judicial authorities to investigate this matter so that we can find out why the person in charge of drafts has prepared this draft in this way. I also demand that the Central Bank clarify this issue.

In my view, this is nothing different from the plots that you have seen in Mashhad, Qom and Esfahan.

[Question] What are your recommendations to the people regarding how they should approach such problems?

[Answer] I am deliberately telling all this to the people so that they may know how the enemies of Islam and the Islamic Republic operate and what they make out of something and use it in order to accuse the officials of the country and in order to create suspicion among the people.

The people should be aware and wakeful so that such conspiracies will not be effective. I regard the wakefulness and the awareness of the people as the means of defeating all conspiracies.

BANI-SADR STUDIES SITUATION ON WAR FRONTS

LD222246 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 2039 GMT 22 Dec 80

[Text] Dr Abolhasan Bani-Sadr, president and commander in chief of the armed forces, tonight studied the situation on the war fronts in a meeting in Khuzestan Province. According to the report of the correspondent of the PARS NEWS AGENCY, at this meeting, which was attended by Brigadier General Zahirnezhad, commander of the ground forces; Colonel Fakuri, minister of defense and commander of the air force, and a number of other commanders of the armed forces of the Islamic Republic of Iran, a report on the operations and actions taken by the personnel of the Armed Forces of the Islamic Republic of Iran and the level of damage and casualties which they have inflicted upon the enemy forces were discussed by the commanders of the forces stationed in Khuzestan.

Then, the methods of operation of the personnel of the armed forces of the Islamic Republic of Iran and popular forces on the battlefields and methods of confrontation with the mercenaries of the armed forces of the Iraqi Ba'thists were discussed.

COMMUNIQUE NO 345 ON 21, 22 DEC BATTLE EVENTS

LD221742 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1630 GMT 22 Dec 80

[Communique No 345 of the Joint Staff of the Armed Forces of the Islamic Republic of Iran]

[Text] In the name of God, with greetings to all dedicated parents whose struggling and great sons, with reliance on the weapon of faith, are fighting Saddam's infidels at the battlefronts and with greetings upon all the honorable and valiant and victorious combatants of our homeland, part of the battlefront events in the course of 21 December and today, 22 December, are as follows:

1. On the Abadan front, due to artillery fire the armed forces of the Islamic Republic of Iran, one enemy communication post, one military vehicle and a number of entrenchments on the Abadan-Mared axis were completely destroyed and a number of the mercenaries were killed. In the Darkhovin region 24 enemy mass entrenchments were destroyed and 10 of Saddam's soldiers were killed and 4 were injured. On the Mared front one light cannon and an enemy ammunition dump were set ablaze.

2. In the Dezful region, due to efforts by the sacrificing personnel of the airborne division of the army of the armed forces of the Islamic Republic of Iran, and with the help of the artillery fire of our forces, two tanks, three personnel carriers, one mobile 130-mm cannon, one mortar, one water tanker, three ammunition tents, one field kitchen and some individual items of enemy equipment were destroyed. In the course of these operations a number of infidels were killed and 18 were injured.

3. On the Dub-e-Herdan front losses inflicted on the enemy included three tanks, one personnel carrier, one truck and one depot and the enemy's casualties amounted to at least 30 persons.

4. Due to shelling of the city of Shush two civilian compatriots were martyred and in the [word indistinct] Naderi the valiant gendarmes and personnel of the armed forces of the Islamic Republic of Iran, in confronting the Iraqi mercenary forces, killed a number of enemy personnel. In the course of this operation two armed forces personnel were wounded.

5. [Word indistinct] and Hamidiyeh fronts were calm today, but Ahvaz and Susangerd were under the enemy's sporadic artillery and mortar fire. Our combatant forces retaliated fiercely.

6. On the western front, engagements between the forces of the armed forces of the Islamic Republic of Iran and the Iraqi invaders are in progress with the fire superiority of our forces at the [Word indistinct] Amirabad, Kani-Sakht, Shur-o-Shirin, and Konjan Cham.

[signed] The Joint Staff of the Armed Forces of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

TEHRAN CITES PARS ON SITUATION ON WAR FRONTS

LD222112 Tehran in English to Europe 1930 GMT 22 Dec 80

[Text] The PARS NEWS AGENCY has reported the situation at the war fronts as follows:

On Sar-e Pol-e Zahab and Qasr-e Shirin fronts, the Iranian combatants have put an Iraqi newly entered war armored brigade under heavy attack for 3 days. In their heaviest clashes, which lasted from 2200 last night until 0700 today, this Iraqi brigade was crushed and 80 Iraqi troops were either killed or injured. This armored brigade then had to retreat. From that time to the time of the dispatch of this report the two sides are exchanging fire in this area.

Yesterday afternoon one ammunition dump and artillery of the Iraqi forces were set on fire by the Iranian artillery fire in Gilan-e Gharb axis. Today on Zahab front, the Iranian Airborne Division destroyed between 30 and 40 Iraqi positions and bunkers and destroyed 15 collective arms including RPG-7 guns. On the same front last night the [Word indistinct] battery, two army vehicles and one tank of the Iraqi Armed Forces were set ablaze by the Iranian artillery fire and all the Iraqi troops of these vehicles were killed. Four Iranian combatants were martyred on this front.

Meanwhile, an informed source said 50 Iraqi invaders have been killed or injured on one of the war fronts in Kermanshahan Province.

In other developments, exchange of fire has been going on on the southern fronts all of last night and today. Last night Iranian artillery fire destroyed several collective and individual entrenchements of the Iraqi forces in Tir Square by the Abadan-Mahshahr road and a number of Iraqi invaders were killed.

Last night and today the Iraqi troops put the residential areas of Abadan under their long-range artillery fire and some houses sustained damage. One civilian was martyred on this front yesterday and 19 others were injured.

Clashes resumed on Abadan and Khunisnshahr [Khorramshahr] fronts all this afternoon between the combatants of Islam and the Iraqi invaders. The city of Dezful was shelled by the Iraqi forces yesterday and today and several houses sustained damage.

Other reports from the southern fronts indicate that on Susangerd front at 1730 yesterday a group of Iranian combatants attacked the enemy forces on this front and destroyed one ammunition depot and one trench.

PARS, quoting an informed source, said: The Iraqi invading forces have been pushed back on Navard front about 5 to 6 kilometers as the result of Iranian artillery fire.

On Allaho Akhbar front the enemy forces had to retreat about 3 kilometres after today's clashes.

STRONG EARTHQUAKE HITS IRANIAN CITIES 22 DEC

LD221750 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1636 GMT 22 Dec 80

[Text] At 1621 and 45 seconds today an earthquake shook the cities of Tehran, Qom, Saddez, Arak, Kashan, Khomeyn, Qazvin, Saveh and 'Aligudarz. The geophysics department of the University of Tehran, in a contact with the Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran, announce the severity of this quake as equal to 5.3 on the Richter scale. This earthquake shook Tehran at 1621 and 45 seconds with a few continuous tremors. The geophysics department of the University of Tehran announced the epicenter of this quake as being 200 kilometers southwest of Tehran in the vicinity of Saqqez, Arak and Qom. According to the report of the PARS NEWS AGENCY, as the result of this quake an old man and a child were killed in Qom and due to the (?collapse) of an old public bathhouse a number of people were wounded and were taken to Neku'i hospital in Qom.

According to another report from the PARS NEWS AGENCY which was transmitted at 1830 today, 32 people wounded in Qom have been taken to Neku'i hospital in Qom and are receiving treatment.

In the Dastgerd District of (Khalajestan) in Qom, (?former Zir), as in last Friday's quake there were a number of fatalities as well as damage, but so far no report has been received about the amount of damage.

According to the PARS NEWS AGENCY, the emergency department in Qom has sent two equipped ambulances together with four medical emergency technicians to this region to aid or transfer the wounded to hospitals. After the quake in Qom the emergency center, the Red Crescent and all the medical centers of the town were put on alert.

The correspondents of the PARS NEWS AGENCY and the Central News Bureau have described today's quake in Qom, Qazvin, Arak, Khomeyn, Saqqez, Saveh and 'Aligudarz as relatively strong and the quake in Kashan as being weak.

Damage in Central Province

LD222146 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 2055 GMT 22 Dec 80

[Text] A few minutes ago the PARS NEWS AGENCY reported that following the earthquake which took place in Central Province today the correspondent of this news agency, in a contact with Mr Khadedini, deputy governor general of Central Province, who at the time of the earthquake was in Khalajestan District where the epicenter of the quake occurred, was informed that as a result of this earthquake Giveh village, composed of 300 households, and Kalaghneshin village have been completely destroyed. Also, Dastjerd, Rastgam and Shaanbeh villages have been half destroyed and Dowlatabad village has been 80 percent destroyed. According to the deputy governor general of Central Province, this earthquake has not caused too many fatalities. In this region only one person has been killed and a number of people have been injured. They have been taken to Qom to receive treatment.

In this interview Mr Khajedini also said: So far, 207 tents have been sent to the earthquake region by the Red Crescent of the Islamic Republic of Iran and about 500 other tents have been requested from Tehran. These will be sent soon. The deputy governor general of Central Province told the correspondent of the PARS NEWS AGENCY: Fortunately, this earthquake happened at a time of day when most of the residents were busy working outside their homes and, consequently, there were few fatalities.

It should be added that today's earthquake in Central Province took place at 1621 and 45 seconds and measured 5.3 on the Richter scale. The earthquake on the previous day in this region had measured 5.8 on the Richter scale.

IRAQI MUSLIM STUDENTS STATEMENT ON CLASHES IN UK

JN221242 Tehran International Service in Arabic 1100 GMT 22 Dec 80

[Text] The Islamic Federation of Iraqi Students has issued the following statement concerning incidents in Britain: London reports have referred to clashes between our faithful Iraqi students and the mercenaries of the traitorous Iraqi regime. These incidents show that the Iraqi nation is opposed to the collapsing despotic regime and that confrontation between the bearers of the flag of the regime and this regime's mercenaries has spread to areas outside Iraq.

The Iraqi despot's mercenaries have tried, as usual, to suppress the voice of right and justice raised by our faithful students, as part of the compaign to suppress our people's resounding cries in every part of struggler Iraq.

While expressing our support for our brother students who are following the course of martyrdom, we tell the despot's lackeys that they will soon be made to account for their acts. The Iraqi nation will settle all of its accounts with those who followed the course of the tyrants and the unjust.

[signed] The Islamic Federation of Iraqi Students.

AHVAZ RADIO ISSUES SECOND 22 DEC RED ALERT

GF221300 Ahvaz Domestic Service in Persian 1253 GMT 22 Dec 80

[Text] This is Ahvaz, Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran. Dear listeners, please pay attention. The siren you are about to hear is the red alert warning. An air raid is inmminent. [sound of siren]